

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Thursday, March 3, 2016
Mansfield Town Hall
Town Council Chambers**

4:00 PM

MINUTES

Present: Steve Bacon, Tom Callahan, Anne D'Alleva, Mona Friedland, Riley Hasson, George Jones, Mike Kirk, June Krisch, Philip Lodewick, Shamim Patwa, and Paul Shapiro

Board Member Emeritus: Betsy Paterson

Staff: Cynthia van Zelm, Kathleen Paterson, Dee Goodrich, Partnership attorney John Zaccaro

1. Call to Order

President Philip Lodewick called the meeting to order at 4:08 pm.

2. Opportunity for Public to Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of Minutes of February 17, 2016

Tom Callahan made a motion to approve the minutes of February 17, 2016. June Krisch seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Steve Bacon made a motion to move Agenda Item 5. Updates from Kathleen Paterson, Partnership Communications and Special Projects Manager and Dee Goodrich, Transportation Coordinator, to Agenda Item 4. Mr. Callahan seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

4. Updates from Kathleen Paterson, Partnership Communications and Special Projects Manager and Dee Goodrich, Transportation Coordinator

Dee Goodrich, Partnership Transportation Coordinator, provided an update on her work at the Nash-Zimmer Transportation Center (NZTC).

One of the main areas she has been focusing on is developing a use for the first floor space of the Nash-Zimmer Transportation Center that was previously used for contractors for Phase 2. After reviewing the space for a variety of potential uses, Ms. Goodrich is working toward utilizing the space as a commuter lounge, allowing it to be flexible for programming as well. She has ordered moveable furniture toward that end and it will have recharging stations for devices. She has been working with the Arts Advisory Committee to put art work in the space.

Ms. Goodrich has been working with the Mansfield Public Library and Parks and Recreation Dept. to program the space. The Library will have a short program series in the spring to help introduce their new tool lending library.

Ms. Goodrich is working with Library Director Leslie McDonough on a draft use agreement for the space. If a fee is charged for the space, the fee must go back into the Town's Transit Fund per the NZTC funder, the Federal Transit Administration and the Greater Hartford Transit District, requirements.

Shamim Patwa noticed the sound issues in the first floor space when the Board meeting was held there last month. Ms. Goodrich said this should be improved with the addition of furniture and art work.

Steve Bacon asked about its use as an entertainment space. Ms. Goodrich said the room could hold up to 50 people. She said she met with Mary Oliver with Windham Arts and they would like to hold poetry readings in the space.

Ms. Goodrich said that Library Express is very popular. She said the goal of the tool lending library is to provide some hand tools to local and Oaks residents.

Ms. Goodrich said the Storrs Center Ambassadors include three UConn students and one local retiree. She is interviewing for new Ambassadors as the students will be graduating. Their job is to provide customer service for questions about the downtown and the buses as well as manage the Library Express. The main questions they get are about directions and parking. Specific parking questions are referred to LAZ Parking that has a nearby office in the parking garage.

WRTD bus passes are now available free of charge to Mansfield residents and UConn students, faculty and staff at the NZTC.

Ms. Goodrich said the Ambassadors also walk the downtown area once a day to pick up trash and note any other infrastructure issues. They also clean off the furniture on Town Square and the tops of the garbage cans once a week in the spring, summer, and fall months.

There are three bus systems that serve the NZTC – Peter Pan, UConn, and WRTD. The Peter Pan bus service is slowly picking up in popularity. Ms. Goodrich is working to reach out

to Mansfield and surrounding communities about the bus service to NYC, Boston, and Providence.

With respect to CT Fastrak, Ms. Goodrich and Mr. Hart wrote a letter to CDOT asking them to consider using the NZTC as a stop when they expand to Storrs (not just on campus). A backup position would be to see if UConn can provide shuttle service to CT Fastrak bus on campus.

Ms. Goodrich is also working on more bike commuter club members with a new spring promotion. Currently, there are three members. She is trying to focus on people who work at UConn and in the downtown.

Paul Shapiro asked if there would be a feed on the screens in the NZTC if CT Fastrak came to the NZTC. Ms. Goodrich said they use a different system than is currently being used so we would need to obtain a feed.

Mr. Shapiro said he thought the infrequency of the Peter Pan bus can be a barrier to its use as Metro North runs more frequently, and is not overly expensive. He hopes there can be more trips. Ms. Goodrich said there are generally three trips a day to NYC, and there is an express on Friday.

Kathleen Paterson, Partnership Communications and Special Projects Manager, provided an update on Partnership events which include the spring Pup Crawl, CT Main Street Awards Gala (Partnership is hosting this year), Summer Concert Series, John E. Jackman Bike Tour, Moonlight Movies, fall Pup Crawl, Trick or Treating, and Winter Welcome.

Ms. Paterson said the Pup Crawl in October garnered traffic from Rhode Island and Massachusetts as it was advertised in the Last Green Valley's Walktober brochure. Ms. Patwa asked if the event helped with foot traffic for restaurants. Ms. Paterson said the Partnership gave out coffee the first time it did the event but not in October. Anecdotally, she believes that walkers did go to the restaurants.

Ms. Paterson said the CT Main Street Awards Gala is June 6. The entire budget is covered by the CT Main Street Center.

She said the Summer Concert Series is growing this summer to at least two months. It has been a very popular series, evolving from the original Live Music Wednesday series. The Summer Concert Series will be held every Thursday in July with the possibility of going into August if enough money is raised.

Ms. Paterson is working with the Town Parks and Rec, and Public Works Departments to put on the Series.

She has received commitments of sponsors from CT Water as the title sponsor at \$10,000 and UConn Summer Programs at \$2,500. Ms. Paterson is currently booking bands.

Mr. Shapiro asked what the plan is for inclement weather. Ms. Paterson said the following Tuesday is the rain date. She said sound is secured for all shows.

Mr. Shapiro asked how many people are expected at the concerts. Ms. Paterson said 200 to 250 people attended last summer.

Mr. Lodewick suggested tracking names so people can be solicited for future sponsorship. Ms. Paterson said volunteers will be needed for this effort to staff a table.

Mona Friedland said she heard some concerns expressed about trying to use local talent. Ms. Paterson said the goal is to program a variety of music with the best affordable talent. Different bands should attract a new audience to experiencing downtown.

Mr. Bacon asked if other groups can perform on the Town Square on their own. Ms. Paterson replied in the affirmative.

Ms. Paterson said the Partnership is waiting for final review and approval of Town Square policies and procedures by the Town's Ordinance Development and Review Subcommittee and Town Council before proceeding with advertising reserving the Town Square. There is currently a form on the Partnership website that people can fill out and return to the Partnership. Ms. Paterson conducts an initial review followed by final review by Town Manager Matt Hart. Ms. Paterson has received 144 requests since the Town Square was built. This also includes publicity requests to include an event on the Partnership calendar of downtown events. Ms. Paterson said many of the requests she receives are from UConn affiliated groups who want to fundraise. Ms. Paterson noted that there is a significant amount of staff time to address and fulfill the requests.

Mr. Shapiro said the target is to have all policies and procedures in place by this spring, hopefully April.

Ms. Paterson said the bike tour is in its 11th year. The Partnership is taking the lead on some of the aspects of the Bike Tour including soliciting sponsorships. The event draws 150 to 175 people.

She said Ms. van Zelm has taken the lead on the Moonlight Movies project with a volunteer group. They are working to incorporate family activities.

Ms. Patwa asked where people will sit. Ms. Paterson said they can use the red tables and chairs but the Partnership will also encourage people to bring their own chairs.

Ms. Paterson said the Festival subcommittee is looking for more volunteers. The Festival is funded entirely through sponsorships. The Festival is the event that takes most of her time.

Trick or Treating is for one hour downtown and leads into the Community Center's Trick a Trunk event. Last year, there were approximately 375 trick or treaters. The E.O. Smith drum line participated and the Mansfield Academy for Dance did a take-off on "Thriller."

Ms. Paterson has not started planning for Winter Welcome yet. This past year, the Partnership and The Wilder Companies paid for the event. There were some private donations by Partnership Board members to light up the Town Square including the oak tree.

With respect to marketing, Ms. Paterson markets the Partnership through several means including the Annual Report, quarterly e-mail newsletter, social media (You Tube, twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and website).

She referenced the creation of a new logo and video which have not been launched yet since the thinking was to wait until the Strategic Plan is completed.

Ms. Paterson is also hoping to revamp the Partnership website so it is geared more toward visitors and will work with the Town IT Dept. on this project. The Town is looking to update its website so the goal is to piggy back on what they are planning. A Partnership website focused on the organization (minutes, documents) will be maintained but separate from a visitor centered website. Ms. Paterson will start work on the website after the Festival.

Ms. van Zelm and the Board commended Ms. Goodrich and Ms. Paterson for all their work.

5. Executive Director Report

Ms. van Zelm encouraged Board members to fill out their Board questionnaire for the Strategic Plan as soon as possible.

Mr. Bacon said there will be a stakeholder meeting on March 22 at 7 pm in the Town Council Chambers to review the preliminary plans for public spaces in Storrs Center by UConn Associate Professor Kristin Schwab and her students.

With respect to the concept of allowing for the manufacture of beer on site at a restaurant, Mr. Shapiro said this would need 1,100 signatures to place this on a referendum. Volunteers would need to take on this initiative. The Board discussed the language of a petition and whether the Council would have input into the wording of legislative language before a petition was started and/or once all signatures were secured.

Ms. van Zelm will add this item to the April 7 Board agenda with assistance from Town Manager Matt Hart.

6. Appointment of Mike Switchenko to the Finance and Administration Committee

Mr. Callahan made a motion to appoint Mike Switchenko to the Finance and Administration Committee. Mr. Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

7. Report from Committees

Advertising and Promotion

The Committee did not meet since the last Board meeting.

Business Development and Retention

The Committee did not meet since the last Board meeting.

Finance and Administration

Ms. van Zelm reviewed the December 31, 2016 Financials. She said the UConn contribution had come in since December 31. The membership renewal campaign has begun. She noted that the professional & technical line item will be overspent due to the work on the Partnership's strategic plan.

Ms. van Zelm said good progress is being made on closing out the public infrastructure grants with STEAP 2 and STEAP 4 closed out.

Chair Tom Callahan asked that future reports include information on sponsorships and donations received for events.

Membership Development

Chair George Jones encouraged all Board members to renew soon.

Nominating

Mr. Lodewick said the Nominating Committee met prior to the Board meeting. He said there are three Board positions to be filled as Mona Friedland and Steve Rogers will be stepping off the Board and he has determined that this may be the right time for him to transition off the Board. Ms. Friedland's position is elected and the Committee will be seeking her replacement.

Mr. Callahan and Betsy Paterson commended Mr. Lodewick for all he has done for the Board, followed by recognition by the entire Board.

8. Adjourn

Mr. Jones made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Friedland seconded the motion. The motion was approved and the meeting adjourned at 5:35 pm.

Minutes taken by Cynthia van Zelm.